

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 26 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend Claims 13, 19, and 25 as follows:

1 - 12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A control method in a printing control apparatus capable of executing printing processing of a predetermined output method using a plurality of member printers grouped as a virtual printer, said method comprising:

a registration step of registering a plurality of the member printers as a virtual printer;

a setting step of setting a virtual printer registered in the registration step to any one of a plurality of output methods about how to use the plurality of member printers, wherein the output methods include (a) a redirect printing method which automatically switches, when an error occurs in a printer to which a print job has been transmitted, to another printer of the plurality of member printers, and (b) a distributed printing method which distributes a print job to the plurality of member printers;

a receiving step of receiving an instruction to display a user interface for setting print properties of a designated virtual printer;

a checking step of checking, upon receiving the instruction, which output method is set for the designated virtual printer;

a first providing step of providing, when it is checked in the checking step that the designated virtual printer is set to the distributed printing method, a first user interface of the virtual printer by performing a conflict process of functions of the plurality of member printers grouped as the virtual printer to compare functions of the plurality of member printers, the first user interface not including a setting item for independently setting the plurality of member printers grouped as the virtual printer; and

a second providing step of providing, when it is checked in the checking step that the designated virtual printer is set to the redirect printing method, a second user interface of the virtual printer without performing the conflict process, the second user interface (a) including a setting item for independently setting a representative member printer of the plurality of member printers grouped as the virtual printer, ~~and~~ (b) not including a setting item for independently setting other member printers of the plurality of member printers grouped as the virtual printer, and (c) including a priority order for redirect printing of the plurality of member printers grouped as the virtual printer, the priority order for redirect printing displaying the order of automatic switching when an error occurs.

14 - 15. (Cancelled)

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein the second user interface comprises a user interface of a printer driver of the representative member printer and a user interface of a printer driver of the virtual printer.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 16, wherein the user interface of the printer driver of the virtual printer contains a setting item for creating intermediate data.

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 13, further comprising a designation step of issuing, to the member printer, a designation of converting a drawing instruction based on intermediate data created on the basis of application data into a predetermined page description language.

19. (Currently Amended) A printing control apparatus capable of executing printing processing of a predetermined output method using a plurality of member printers grouped as a virtual printer, said apparatus comprising:

registration means for registering a plurality of the member printers as a virtual printer;

setting means for setting a virtual printer registered by the registration means to any one of a plurality of output methods about how to use the plurality of member printers, wherein the output methods include (a) a redirect printing method which automatically switches, when an error occurs in a printer to which a print job has been transmitted, to another printer of the plurality of member printers, and (b) a distributed printing method which distributes a print job to the plurality of member printers;

receiving means for receiving an instruction to display a user interface for setting print properties of a designated virtual printer;

checking means for checking, upon receiving the instruction, which output method is set for the designated virtual printer;

first providing means for providing, when it is checked by the checking means that the designated virtual printer is set to the distributed printing method, a first user interface of the virtual printer by performing a conflict process of functions of the plurality of member printers grouped as the virtual printer to compare functions of the plurality of member printers, the first user interface not including a setting item for independently setting the plurality of member printers grouped as the virtual printer; and

second providing means for providing, when it is checked by the checking means that the designated virtual printer is set to the redirect printing method, a second user interface of the virtual printer without performing the conflict process, the second user interface (a) including a setting item for independently setting a representative member printer of the plurality of member printers grouped as the virtual printer, ~~and~~ (b) not including a setting item for independently setting other member printers of the plurality of member printers grouped as the virtual printer, and (c) including a priority order for redirect printing of the plurality of member printers grouped as the virtual printer, the priority order for redirect printing displaying the order of automatic switching when an error occurs.

20 - 21. (Cancelled)

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein the second user interface comprises a user interface of a printer driver of the representative member printer and a user interface of a printer driver of the virtual printer.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the user interface of the printer driver of the virtual printer contains a setting item for creating intermediate data.

24. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 19, further comprising designation means for issuing, to the member printer, a designation of converting a drawing instruction based on intermediate data created on the basis of application data into a predetermined page description language.

25. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable ~~storage~~ recording medium having a computer-executable program stored thereon for ~~effecting~~ executing the method according to claim 13.

26. (Cancelled)